

# Schlocky fright film

*But 'New Year's Evil' isn't even very scary*

By LAURICE NIEMTUS

Louisville Times Critic

Louisville Times rating: ★

Now that you've had your own kind of New Year's Eve celebration, perhaps you're in the mood for a movie to keep your holiday spirit alive. If that's your plan, avoid "New Year's Evil," which opened Wednesday at Showcase Cinemas.

Of course, if you really go for schlocky fright films, this one might be exactly to your taste. And if that's the case, I'd catch it right away since it can't be expected to hang around too long.

With a title like "New Year's Evil," this movie is really only appropriate one day a year, and that's about the length of time I'd book this one if I were a theater owner. At least we can hope the studios will come up with something a little more tasteful or involving or even scary by next year, so that this film will be relegated to

either late, late night TV showings on future New Year's Eves or into the "vaults" permanently.

The plot, such as it is, revolves around a rock "personality," played by Roz Kelly. You may remember her as Pinky Tuscadero, Fonzie's girlfriend a few years back on TV's "Happy Days" series. Here, she plays "Blaze," a TV star-emcee of a new wave rock show on — when else — New Year's Eve.

She's also a mother who neglects her gorgeous and obviously depressed son. And she doesn't seem overly concerned about her husband, played by Kip Niven, who's been detained in a mental hospital as the film opens.

Blaze is too wrapped up in her role as Queen of the L. A. Rock Scene to care much about these private, personal situations. Instead, she's wrapped up in the "decadence" of her fans and the fame her show has brought her.

But as she's taking a phone request during her New Year's Eve telecast, things turn more ugly than decadent when she gets a call from a "psycho-path" who threatens to kill someone "close to her" at the stroke of midnight.

And Blaze's show is set up to celebrate all the midnights from East Coast to West, so that gives the murderer several chances. We learn he plans to take every chance when he calls back after midnight passes New York and plays a tape over the phone of his first murder.

The police aren't overly worried until then either, telling Blaze: "You

people. You create a problem, then you complain." Her audience, the police lieutenant tells her, is full of "that kind of nuts."

Never mind that her audience has no access to a phone. Never mind that they're all too busy dancing to two real bands, Shadow and Made in Japan, to care about murder. They are the weirdos in this picture, and they're played for every second of footage they're worth.

Actually, this sluggish, tired looking bunch hardly seems threatening or even decadent. They look like what some movie producer's idea of decadence is, and for this film, that's apparently enough.

But the real murderer is never hidden from us, and he's straight as a die. His motives are so obvious as to be clichéd. You know who he'll pick next and why.

The biggest why about "New Year's Evil" is why this movie was ever made. New wave rock and a murderous psycho spilling possibly the year's biggest holiday might have sounded like a hip, trendy subject for a movie. But this film never really explores any of its ripe possibilities.

There aren't even any really scary scenes, since you already know what's going to happen as each event takes place. In fact, this may be the turkey of the season, considered overall.

## Sensitivity Rating

Several bloody, fairly violent scenes, but no physical violence portrayed. Several bare breasts, but no sex. Rated R.

**DON'T DARE MAKE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS...  
UNLESS YOU PLAN TO LIVE!**



# NEW YEAR'S EVIL

...a celebration  
of the macabre.

THE CANNON GROUP INC. Presents a Golan-Globus Production of an EMMETT ALSTON Film "NEW YEAR'S EVIL"

Starring ROZ KELLY · KIP NIVEN · CHRIS WALLACE · GRANT CRAMER · LOUISA MORITZ · JED MILLS

Executive Producer BILLY FINE Produced by MENAHEM GOLAN and YORAM GLOBUS Associate Producer CHRISTOPHER PEARCE

Directed by EMMETT ALSTON Screenplay by LEONARD NEUBAUER Story by LEONARD NEUBAUER and EMMETT ALSTON Music by LAURIN RINDER and W. MICHAEL LEWIS

➔ A Cannon Films Release

Original Soundtrack Available on CANNON Records and Tapes

**R** RESTRICTED  
UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING  
PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN

COPYRIGHT 1980 CANNON FILMS INC.